Woodcarving is practised at many places, and that turned out at Bijbihara is especially noted. The work is artistic, but suffers from the fact that the Kashmiri is a bad carpenter. Lacquered wood-work is produced at Kulgam. Woollen cloth (pattu) is woven all over the State, the best work being produced in the north, while the finished product of the south is especially famous. Blankets are made in many places, and sometimes fetch Rs. 25 a piece. The blacksmiths are very skilful, and some have been able to make surgical instruments and repair gun-locks. The city of Srinagar is noted for its silver, copper, wood-carving, and lacquer. The shawl and paper industries are almost extinct, but many of the shawl-workers have become expert weavers of carpets or have taken to embroidering felts. Good embroidery is also turned out at Islamabad. An industry started very recently, in connexion with the development of sericulture, is the weaving of silk cloth. In 1906 about 100 looms of improved pattern were imported and set up.

Commerce and trade. Up to quite recent times Kashmir was almost a self-supporting country, and the chief imports--piece-goods, metals, salt, sugar, tea, and tobacco--were of modest dimensions. Before the opening of the cart-road from Rawalpindi to Baramula in 1890, the trade was carried by Kashmiris who went down every winter to work in the Punjab, and brought back domestic requisites, or by the professional muleteers,or by Punjabi bullock-drivers. There were three trade routes. The most direct crossed the Banihal pass and ran to Jammu, the railway terminus; the most popular route followed the old imperial road over the Pir Panjal, reaching the railway at Gujrat; and the third was known as the Jhelum valley road, which is now the cart-road and the main line of communication with the Punjab.

In 1892-3 the total imports from India were valued at 48. 7 lakhs. In 1902-3 the imports reached 118 lakhs, but the trade of that and later years was greatly impaired by the prevalence of plague in the Punjab. In 1904-5 the total value was 115 lakhs. The table on the next page shows the value of the more important imports in the years chosen for comparison.

There can be little doubt that Kashmir has increased enormously in prosperity of late years. The land revenue settlement has turned the agricultural classes from serfs into well-to-do peasants, and their wealth is reflected in their increased purchases. The increase in the import of salt is especially satisfactory, as in 1892 it was shown that the annual average of consumption in Kashmir was exactly half of that prevailing in the Punjab.